

CLAIMS

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1. A method for call processing in a call center comprising the steps of:
- receiving at least one incoming telephone call over a communications network;
- presenting at least one interactive menu which includes a plurality of selections for
- 5 processing the incoming call, wherein the plurality of selections includes a queuing option which is configurable to assign a priority to at least one incoming call, place a call in a call queue for future routing, and simultaneously providing access to a plurality of automated interactive functions; and
- in response to at least one detected event, routing the incoming call from the call queue to a selected destination.
2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the selected destination is at least one call attendant.
3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the detected event comprises a change in an availability status of at least one call attendant.
- 15 4. The method of Claim 3 wherein an order for routing at least one incoming call to the at least one call attendant is based on an assigned priority.
5. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of assigning a priority to said incoming call is performed by extracting identification information from the incoming call and using the identification information to retrieve priority information from memory.
- 20 6. The method of Claim 1 wherein said step of assigning a priority is based upon the order of the incoming call was received.
7. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of routing the incoming call is performed during performance of one of the plurality of automated interactive functions.

8. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step or routing the at least one incoming call is performed upon detected completion of one of the plurality of automated interactive functions.

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9. A system for processing telephone calls comprising:

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a communications network interface device configurable for receiving and processing of at least one incoming telephone call and providing at least one automated interactive function;

5 a queuing application in connection with the network interface which is configured to assign a priority to at least one incoming call and to simultaneously hold at least one incoming telephone call in a call queue while at least one incoming telephone call is hosted in the communications network interface; and

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a call distributing apparatus in connection with at least one communications network interface which is configured to route at least one incoming call to a designated destination upon receiving indication from the queuing application.

10. The system of Claim 9 wherein the destination is a customer telephone system which supports call attendants.

11. The system of Claim 9 wherein at least one of: the communications network interface, the queuing application, the call distributing apparatus; are resident on a central office switch in a public switched telephone network (PSTN).
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12. The system of Claim 9 wherein at least one of: the communications network interface, the queuing application, the call distributing apparatus; are resident on customer premise equipment (CPE).

13. The system of Claim 9 wherein the communications network interface is
20 configured on voice response unit (VRU) interfaced with the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

14. The system of claim 9 wherein the queuing application is configured on a network based application server.

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15. The system of Claim 9 wherein the call distributing apparatus is configured on an automatic call distributor (ACD).

16. The system of Claim 15 wherein the ACD routes the at least one incoming call to a customer PBX system over data network.

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